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ABSTRACT

In 2001, 1.76 million students undertook training in Australia's public vocational education and training (VET) system. Nearly one-third of all Australians between the ages of 15 and 19 years participated in VET. Over the four years from 1998 to 2001, the number of students reported as participating in the public VET system increased by 221,500 (14%). Females accounted for nearly half of all VET students, with the level of female enrolments remaining stable since 1998. More than 58,000 VET students identified themselves as indigenous (an increase of 12% from 2000). Nearly three-fourths of all VET students attended a technical and further education institution, with the remaining students distributed equally between community education providers and "other" registered training providers. The average number of annual hours of study per VET student increased to 215 hours (up from 189 hours in 2000). In 2001, 90% of VET students studied part-time, with the proportion of full-time and part-time students remaining fairly stable from 1998 to 2001 and the proportions of males and females remaining nearly identical during that period. Seventy percent of VET students were studying for a qualification recognized under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), which was 6 percentage points higher than in 1998. Nearly two-thirds of the 430,00 qualifications completed in 2001 were AQF qualifications. (Contains 29 tables/figures.) (MN)

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Australian vocational education and training statistics 2001

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An overview

This publication provides information about students undertaking training within Australia's public Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in 2001. It provides an overview of student characteristics as well as the nature of training being undertaken. Trends and changes over recent years are also presented.

In 2001:

- 1.76 million students undertook training in the public vocational education and training system, equating to more than one eighth of Australia's working age population.
- Nearly a third of all Australians aged 15–19 years participated in vocational education and training, up from a quarter in 1998. VET in Schools has driven this change.
- Females accounted for almost a half of all VET students; this proportion has been stable since 1998.
- There were over 58 000 VET students who identified themselves as Indigenous; an increase of 12% from 2000.
- Nearly three-quarters of all VET students attended a TAFE institution, with the remaining students distributed equally between community education providers and 'other' registered training providers.
- The average number of annual hours of study per VET student increased to 215 hours, up from 189 in 2000.
- 70% of VET students were studying for a qualification recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), an increase of six percentage points since 1998.
- 430 000 qualifications were completed; almost two-thirds of these being AQF qualifications.

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Australian National Training Authority

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Introduction

The Australian vocational education and training (VET) system provides training across a wide range of subject areas, delivered through a variety of training institutions and enterprises (including New Apprenticeships). People can access VET to gain the skills needed to enter the workforce for the first time, to re-enter the workforce, to retrain for a new job or to upgrade skills for an existing job.

The system is broad and diverse, and training takes place in a variety of arenas, including classrooms, the workplace, on-line and through other flexible delivery methods. The VET system provides training for Australians of all ages and backgrounds, to meet the skill needs of individuals and industry alike. While VET training providers can be either publicly or privately funded, the information provided in this report refers only to activity within the public VET system.

The Australian Recognition Framework, introduced in January 1998 was a comprehensive approach to national recognition of VET. It was based on a quality assured approach to the registration of training providers seeking to deliver training, assess competency outcomes and issue qualifications. At the meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Australian National Training Authority in May 1998, Ministers agreed to a clarification/strengthening of several aspects of the Australian Recognition Framework Arrangements document, which was updated in January 1999.

Recognising that there was a need to improve confidence in Australian VET, the Australian Recognition Framework was comprehensively reviewed by the National Training Quality Council in conjunction with States and Territories, the Commonwealth and industry and in June 2001 Ministers renamed the Australian Recognition Framework as the Australian Quality Training Framework. Standards have been adopted under the Australian Quality Training Framework which replace the Australian Recognition Framework arrangements. These Standards are in two parts:

- ◇ Standards for Registered Training Organisations; and
- ◇ Standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies.

The Australian Quality Training Framework is now the central framework for vocational education and training in Australia.

VET students

Student numbers

During 2001, some 1.76 million students undertook training in the public vocational education and training system. This means that more than one eighth of Australia's working age population was enrolled in the public VET system in 2001.

The number of students in vocational education and training increased steadily during the 1990s (Figure 1), with growth of almost 81% between 1990 and 2000, but remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2001. Over the four years from 1998 to 2001, the number of students reported as participating in the public VET system increased by 221 500, an increase of 14% over this time.

VET in schools and growth in the New Apprenticeship system have been two major drivers of growth in the public VET system in recent years, while National Training Packages have had a major impact on the programs delivered.

States, Territories and the Commonwealth have actively promoted VET in schools as a pathway to improve the transition of young people from school to post-school activities. Specific-purpose funding for VET in schools has been provided by ANTA and is supplemented by State and Territory allocations. VET in schools has become an important alternative to more traditional pathways.

In this report, the term 'apprenticeship' is used in reference to both apprenticeships and traineeships. This is consistent with the introduction in 1998 of the 'new apprenticeship' system, which incorporated apprenticeships and traineeships into a single national system. Apprenticeships are an important part of education and training, as well as the employment system, in Australia. The increase in apprentice and trainee numbers reported in 2001 continued the growth that occurred throughout the late 90s, particularly after the introduction of New Apprenticeships in 1998.

In 2001, apprenticeship activity in Australia was at record levels. There was an increase in the total number of apprentices and trainees in training, as well as in the number of commencements and completions. In particular:

- ◇ At 31 December 2001, around 329 580 individuals were undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship, an increase of 11.8% from 31 December 2000.
- ◇ In the twelve months to December 2001, there were 228 540 commencements, an increase of 8.7% over the number of commencements reported in the previous year.
- ◇ During the year 2001, there were around 96 290 completions, a 14.1% increase over the previous year.

Between 1997 and 2001, National Training Packages progressively replaced national courses and modules. Each Training Package comprises a set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing people's skills and describes competencies relevant to a specific industry. Training Packages provide the basic building blocks for vocational education and training programs and define a range of pathways, including New Apprenticeships, that give people an opportunity to achieve a national qualification. The packages are developed by the national Industry Training Advisory Boards and other industry-based bodies or enterprises to meet the identified training needs of specific industries or industry sectors.

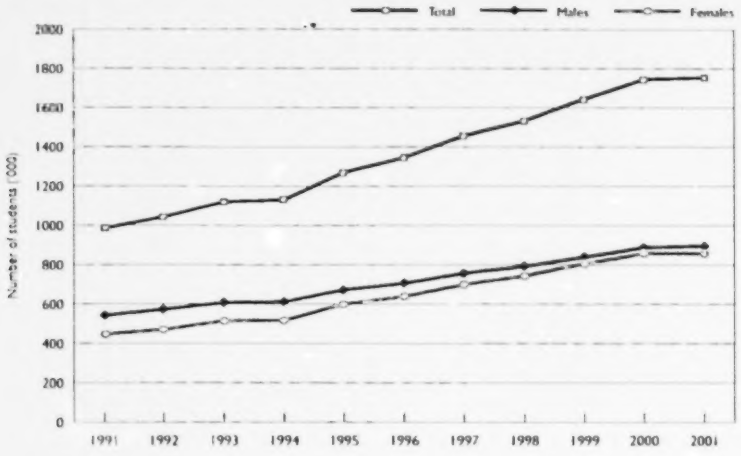
The proportion of Australia's working age population (15–64 year olds) involved in some kind of vocational education and training was virtually unchanged between 2000 and 2001, at just over 13%. This proportion was slightly higher than the 12% reported in 1998.

Table 1: Vocational education and training participation, 1998 to 2001

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Student numbers in VET ('000)	1,535.2	1,647.2	1,749.4	1,756.8
% of Australia's resident population	8.2	8.7	9.1	9.1
% of Australia's working age population*	12.0	12.7	13.2	13.1

* Students aged 15 to 64.

Figure 1: Number of vocational education and training students, 1991 to 2001 ('000)



Sex

In 2001, there were 896 300 males and 860 400 females participating in vocational education and training. During the 1990s, there was a substantial increase in both the absolute number and the relative proportion of females in the VET system. This increase stabilised between 1998 and 2001, with the proportion of female VET students steady at around 49% over this period.

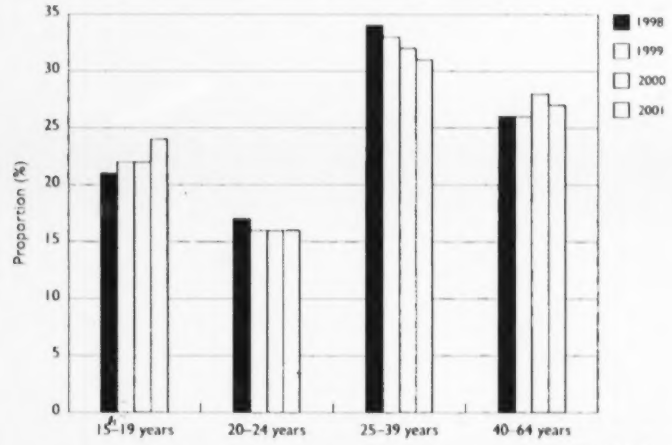
Table 2: Percentage of males and females in VET, 1998 to 2001

	Males		Females	
Year	Number ('000)	Per cent	Number ('000)	Per cent
1998	790.7	51.5	744.5	48.5
1999	839.4	51.0	807.8	49.0
2000	888.0	50.8	861.3	49.2
2001	896.3	51.0	860.4	49.0

Age profile

There was an increase in student numbers across all the major age groups between 1998 and 2001, although the largest growth occurred in the 15–19 years age group, which increased by almost 30% over this time. In 2001, 425 300 15–19 year olds—accounting for nearly a third of all Australians in this age group—were undertaking some sort of vocational and education training. There was also a large increase in the number of 40–64 year olds participating in VET over this time, from 392 500 in 1998 to 477 400 in 2001, an increase of 22%.

Figure 2: The proportion of VET students in major age groups, 1998 to 2001



In 2001, 29% of Australian females aged 15–19 participated in the public VET system, an increase of over 3 percentage points from 2000. The participation rate for males in this age group also continued the trend of steady growth seen over the preceding years, increasing by two percentage points between 2000 and 2001.

Table 3: Participation rates in VET by gender and age group, 1998 to 2001

	Year			
	1998	1999	2000	2001
Male participation rates				
15–19 years	27.6	29.5	31.0	33.2
20–24 years	21.1	21.7	22.0	21.9
25–39 years	12.2	12.5	12.5	12.4
40–64 years	6.5	6.9	7.7	7.3
Female participation rates				
15–19 years	22.2	24.1	25.9	29.2
20–24 years	17.1	17.9	18.2	17.8
25–39 years	11.9	12.5	12.6	12.1
40–64 years	7.9	8.6	9.5	8.8
All persons participation rates				
15–19 years	24.9	26.9	28.5	31.2
20–24 years	19.1	19.8	20.2	19.9
25–39 years	12.0	12.5	12.6	12.2
40–64 years	7.2	7.8	8.6	8.1

The actual number of VET students has increased within all major age groups since 1998, but the growth has been noticeably higher for the 15-19 and 40-64 year age groups. As a result, the proportion of teenagers in the system has increased from 21% in 1998 to around 24% in 2001. The increase in VET in schools activity has contributed to the growth in the 15-19 age group. For persons aged 40-64 years of age, the proportion increased from 26% in 1998 to more than 28% in 2000, before falling to 27% in 2001. The proportions of students in the 20-24 years and 25-39 years age groups decreased between 1998 and 2001.

Geographic location and region

In 2001, the distribution of vocational education and training students across Australia's States and Territories was generally in accordance with each State or Territory's share of Australia's population aged 15 years and over. New South Wales and Victoria, the largest states in terms of population, had a slightly larger proportion of vocational education and training students than their population shares.

Table 4: VET students in each State and Territory, 2001

State/Territory	VET students ('000)	State proportion (%)	State's share of population*
New South Wales	604.7	34.4	33.7
Victoria	471.7	26.8	25.1
Queensland	320.4	18.2	18.5
South Australia	144.0	8.2	7.9
Western Australia	136.4	7.8	9.8
Tasmania	35.3	2.0	2.4
Northern Territory	22.6	1.3	0.9
Australian Capital Territory	21.6	1.2	1.6
Australia	**1,756.8**	**100.0**	**100.0**

* Aged 15 years and over.

In 2001, the majority of the vocational education and training students in Australia lived in capital cities or other metropolitan areas (Table 5). Rural and remote areas had proportionately more vocational education and training students than their share of the overall population. The proportions of vocational education and training students living in capital cities or rural and remote areas have changed little since 1998.

Table 5: VET students by geographic region, 2001

	Number ('000)	Proportion of VET students (%)	Proportion of Australian population (%)**
Capital city	969.9	55.2	64.2
Other metropolitan	128.3	7.3	7.4
Rural	548.5	31.2	25.3
Remote	68.3	3.9	2.8
Other*	41.7	2.4	
Australia	**1,756.8**	**100.0**	**100.0**

* 'Other' includes students outside Australia and in regions not defined.
** ABS data 2001

Educational background

Over a quarter of students undertaking vocational education and training in 2001 had post-school qualifications. Of these, most held a trade, technical or 'other' certificate. The proportion of students who held a previous tertiary vocational or academic qualification remained much the same over the years 1998 through 2001, decreasing by one percentage point over this time.

Table 6: The highest level of previous educational attainment of VET students, 1998 and 2001

	1998		2001	
	Number ('000)	Percentage* (%)	Number ('000)	Percentage* (%)
Degree/postgraduate diploma	67.5	6.3	83.9	6.4
Associate diploma/undergraduate diploma	44.2	4.2	52.1	4.0
Trade/technical certificate	108.0	10.1	121.2	9.3
Other certificate	116.1	10.9	165.2	12.7
Other unspecified post-secondary	43.9	4.1	31.3	2.4
Sub-total tertiary	**379.6**	**35.7**	**453.7**	**34.8**
Year 12	283.4	26.6	309.8	23.8
Year 10 or 11	309.6	29.1	420.1	32.3
Year 9 or lower	91.8	8.6	118.7	9.1
Sub-total schooling only	**684.9**	**64.3**	**848.6**	**5.2**
Sub-total (known)*	**1,064.5**	**100.0**	**1,302.3**	**100.0**
Unknown	470.7		454.5	
Total (all students)	**1,535.2**		**1,756.8**	

* Sub-total and percentages are calculated only from those students whose previous educational attainment was known.

Indigenous students

The number of Indigenous students participating in vocational education and training increased by 12% between 2000 and 2001, to reach 58 000 students. This was in contrast to an increase of only 2% in Indigenous VET student numbers between 1999 and 2000. The participation of Indigenous people in vocational education and training was generally very low until the late 1980s, but numbers have showed steady growth since then. The proportion of Indigenous people in the Australian population aged 15 years and over was 1.8%, based on ABS estimated residential population, at 30 June 2001.

Table 7: The number and proportion of Indigenous VET students, 1998 to 2001

	Number ('000)	Proportion of all VET students (%)
1998	44.4	2.9
1999	50.8	3.1
2000	51.7	3.0
2001	58.0	3.3

Although the participation of Indigenous students in vocational education and training appeared quite strong in 2001, they did tend to undertake courses leading to lower level qualifications than VET students overall. Of those Indigenous students studying for an AQF qualification in 2001, 50% reported their major course as one leading to an AQF certificate I or II qualification, while the proportion for all VET students was 31%. In contrast, only 15% of Indigenous students reported their major course as one leading to an

AQF certificate IV qualification or higher compared with 28% of all VET students. This may be related to the younger age profile of the Indigenous population, given that students studying at higher qualification levels tend to be older than students studying at lower qualification levels (see Table 17).

Table 8: Percentage of students at each AQF qualification level*, by Indigenous status, 1998 and 2001

	1998		2001	
	Indigenous students	All students	Indigenous students	All students
AQF Certificate IV or higher	14.5	27.2	15.0	28.2
AQF certificate III or equivalent	16.4	20.9	23.0	26.9
AQF certificates I and II	36.7	21.4	50.4	31.0
AQF level unknown**	12.3	7.5	1.8	2.1
Other recognised courses	20.0	23.0	9.7	11.8
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

* Does not include students studying non-award courses or single subjects.
** Includes 'AQF Senior secondary'.

Students from a non-English-speaking background

Around 12% of all vocational education and training students in 2001 reported that they were not born in a main English-speaking country.

Since 1998, the number of VET students of non-English-speaking background has risen by 11%, from 184 100 in 1998 to 204 700 in 2001. The proportion of all VET students who were born in a non-English-speaking country has remained fairly stable, at around 12%, over this time. The proportion of the Australian population born in a non-English-speaking country was 13.3% based on 1996 ABS Census data.

Table 9: Number and proportion of VET students who were born in a non-English-speaking country, 1998 to 2001

	Number ('000)	Proportion (%)
1998	184.1	12.0
1999	194.1	11.8
2000	202.7	11.6
2001	204.7	11.7

In 2001, over a quarter of students who were not born in a main English-speaking country enrolled in courses in the 'TAFE multi-field education' field of study, compared with 11% of all VET students. These courses include many general preparatory and language courses, but do not generally result in recognised vocational qualifications.

Students reporting a disability

The number of vocational students reporting a disability increased from 53 900 in 1998 to 69 200 in 2001, an increase of 28% over this time. The proportion of the total VET population reporting a disability remained fairly stable between 1998 and 2001, fluctuating between 3.5% and 3.9%.

Table 10: Growth in the number of VET students reporting a disability, 1998 to 2001

	Number ('000)	Proportion (%)
1998	53.9	3.5
1999	63.2	3.8
2000	62.1	3.5
2001	69.2	3.9

Students who reported a disability in 2001 also had a larger proportion of students enrolled in courses within the 'TAFE multi-field education' field of study than other VET students.

Training providers

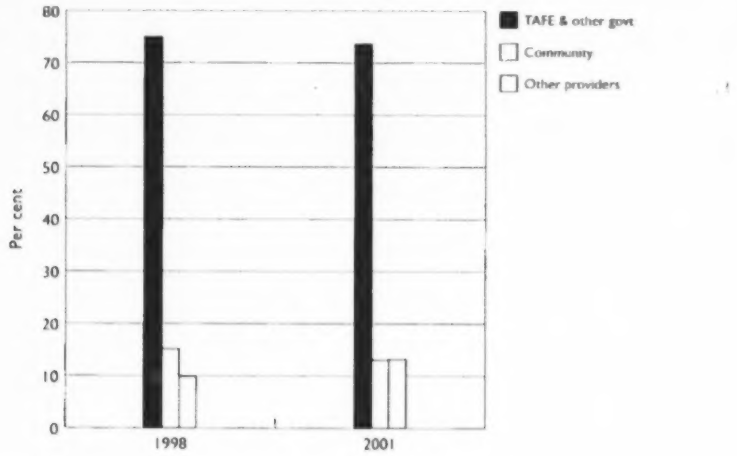
In 2001, there was a wide range of Australian training institutions and enterprises offering vocational education and training programs. This publication contains information only on those training providers that receive public funding. In 2001, these included:

- ◇ 87 TAFE institutes, delivering vocational education and training at more than 1320 campuses;
- ◇ over 980 community education providers; and
- ◇ over 5640 other registered providers (including secondary schools).

TAFE has always been the largest provider of vocational education and training in Australia. In 2001, it continued its dominance with 1 294 500 students, accounting for nearly three quarters of all students in the public VET system. Over 80% of the hours of VET study undertaken in 2001 were also delivered at TAFE institutions.

Over 229 600 students undertook vocational education and training with community education providers in 2001, accounting for 13% of the total VET population. A similar proportion of the VET population were enrolled with other registered providers. The proportion of students enrolled with 'other' providers increased from 10% in 1998 to 13% in 2001, while the proportion with TAFE or community providers decreased slightly.

Figure 3: Percentage of VET students by provider type, 1998 and 2001



New Apprenticeships

Training undertaken through an apprenticeship[1] program is an important pathway for Australians who want to gain vocational skills and qualifications. To undertake an apprenticeship, a student enters into a contract of training with a particular employer. At 30 June 2001, over 325 000 Australians were undertaking this option, which provided them with an opportunity to combine on-the-job experience with a formal instruction at a training organisation—in most cases at a TAFE institute. On-the-job apprenticeship training focuses on practical vocational skills, while its off-the-job component provides theory-based instruction[2].

1 In this report, the term 'apprenticeship' is used in reference to both apprenticeships and traineeships. This is consistent with the introduction in 1998 of the 'new apprenticeship' system, which incorporated apprenticeships and traineeships into a single national system.

2 Apprentices can undertake off-the-job training at various stages before, during or after their on-the-job training. Also, in some cases, it is possible for an apprentice to undertake both components of training (i.e. formal instruction and practical experience) in the workplace only.

VET in schools

Undertaking VET while still attending school has become an increasingly popular option for young Australians in recent years. In 2001, there was an expansion in the reporting scope of school-based vocational education and training, which made comparison with previous years problematic. There were over 151 000 school-based VET students reported in 2001, accounting for over 11% of all VET students[3].

Non-traditional modes of training delivery

Over the last few years, with the rapid developments in information and communication technologies, non-classroom learning modes have become increasingly popular and important in the delivery of VET. For example, in 2001, over 6% of all VET subjects studied were accessed through workplace-based delivery and 4% were delivered via remote access.

3 This figure is based on students whose school status was reported. Some school-based students may not have reported they were still at school.

Within the Australian VET system students may study individual subjects, or full courses that lead to formal qualifications. The majority of subjects and courses on offer fall within a number of recognised 'fields of study', which enables the identification of specific streams within the diverse scope of VET training activity.

Annual hours

The number of annual hours[4] of VET study increased markedly from 2000 to 2001, from 332.6 million to 377.6 million. This was an increase of over 13% and continued the trend of continuous growth in this area. The increase in annual hours in 2001 also effected a reversal of the downward trend in average annual hours per student (from 189.3 hours in 2000 to 214.9 hours in 2001). The increase in average annual hours per student reflects the growth in training package activity which accounted for 44% of annual hours delivered in 2001, (261.5 average annual hours per student) compared to 29% of annual hours delivered in 2000. The increase in VET in schools activity also contributed to the growth in average hours per student.

Table 11: Annual hours* of VET study, 2000 to 2001

	2000	2001
Annual hours in VET ('000 000)	332.6	377.6
Average annual hours per student for training package accredtation	233.5	261.5
Average annual hours per student	189.3	214.9

* Annual hours for all states except Victoria are based on 'End data reporting', where the hours for an enrolment associated with 'Continuing studies' are shown only for the year when the final outcome is reported.

In 2001, VET students studying for higher level qualifications were generally undertaking more hours of study than those studying for lower level qualifications, or modules only. For example, students studying for AQF diploma or higher level qualifications accounted for 12% of all VET students, but undertook more than 20% of all annual hours in 2001. In contrast, students studying for non-award courses made up 15% of all VET students, but were only responsible for 4% of all annual hours undertaken in 2001.

Table 12: Percentage of students and annual hours undertaken, by major qualification level, 2000–2001

	2000		2001	
	% of students	% of annual hours*	% of students	% of annual hours*
AQF diploma & higher	11.4	24.4	11.5	23.1
AQF Cert. IV or equivalent	9.9	13.2	10.8	14.4
AQF Cert. III or equivalent	19.5	26.8	21.3	26.1
AQF Cert. II	17.4	19.0	19.4	21.2
AQF Cert. I	4.8	4.8	5.2	4.7
AQF sub total**	**65.4**	**90.4**	**69.9**	**91.1**
Other recognised course	6.9	2.9	9.4	4.4
Non-award course	22.7	5.7	14.7	3.0
Module only	5.0	1.0	6.0	1.4
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

* Annual hours for all states except Victoria are based on 'End date reporting', where the hours for an enrolment associated with 'Continuing studies' are shown only for the year when the final outcome is reported.

** Includes AQF Senior secondary and AQF Level unknown.

4 Annual hours are used as a measure of total VET delivery. They are based on nominal hours for each subject (module or unit of competency) when the subject is undertaken in standard, supervised delivery mode, although some students undertake subjects in self-paced learning, flexible-delivery, on-line or remote-access modes.

Field of study

Field of study classifies courses based on the major vocational or educational content. Between 1999 and 2001, the most popular fields of study for VET students included:

Business, administration, economics, which in 2001 attracted 19% of all VET students and comprised courses designed to develop students' skills in carrying out administration, secretarial, and general clerical duties; analysing, designing, and operating data processing systems; writing and testing programs and operating computerised information systems.

Services, hospitality, transportation, which accounted for 13% of students in 2001 and comprised courses designed to provide skills that will enable students to work in hospitality and tourism sales and services or in food and beverage sales and services, including catering services. The relatively high percentage of students undertaking courses in services, hospitality and transportation in 2000 reflects the demand for training associated with the hosting of the Olympics.

Engineering and surveying, which accounted for 12% of students in 2001 and offered courses designed to develop skills in designing, installing, maintaining or operating systems, facilities and plant equipment within a wide range of engineering/technology areas, including food processing technology.

Many students also chose to study what is known as VET multi-field education, which includes general education and preparatory courses in areas such as literacy, numeracy, and study skills.

Table 13: Percentage of VET students in each major field of study', 1999 to 2001

Field of study	1999	2000	2001
Land and marine resources, animal husbandry	5.1	5.2	5.7
Architecture, building	5.1	4.8	5.1
Art, humanities and social sciences	7.1	6.7	6.8
Business, administration, economics	21.0	20.8	19.5
Education	2.2	2.5	3.1
Engineering, surveying	13.5	11.5	11.6
Health, community services	8.7	7.9	8.9
Law, legal studies	0.6	0.6	0.6
Science	5.8	6.9	8.1
Veterinary science, animal care	0.2	0.2	0.3
Services, hospitality, transportation	13.1	16.6	13.2
VET multi-field education	11.9	11.3	11.1
Subject only – no course	5.7	5.0	6.0
Total (%)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Total ('000)	**1,647.2**	**1,749.4**	**1,756.8**

While there were similar numbers of males and females undertaking VET in 2001, there were differences between their training choices. For example, there was a far greater proportion of women studying in the *Business, administration, economics* field of study, while the *Engineering, surveying* field of study was more popular with males.

Other fields of study that were popular among females included *Services, hospitality, transportation, Health, community services* and *Arts, humanities, social sciences*. In addition to *Engineering, surveying*, the popular choices for males in 2001 included *Services, hospitality, transportation, Business, administration, economics* and *Architecture, building*. The proportion of females studying subjects only (i.e. not associated with a field of study) was twice as high as for males.

5 The data relate to the students' major course– i.e. the course that leads to the highest qualification (if the student is enrolled in more than one course). In those cases where two different courses undertaken by the same student lead to the same qualification, the course which accounts for the highest number of annual hours is considered the student's major course.

Table 14: Percentage of VET students in each major field of study, by sex, 2001

Major field of study[a]	Proportion (%) Males	Females
Land and marine resources, animal husbandry	8.5	2.7
Architecture, building	9.0	0.9
Art, humanities and social sciences	5.0	8.6
Business, administration, economics	12.8	26.4
Education	2.5	3.8
Engineering, surveying	19.9	2.9
Health, community services	5.7	12.3
Law, legal studies	0.7	0.6
Science	8.6	7.7
Veterinary science, animal care	0.1	0.5
Services, hospitality, transportation	13.3	13.1
TAFE multi-field education	10.0	12.3
Subject only – no field of study	3.8	8.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
Number of students ('000)*	**896.3**	**860.4**

* Pro-rated to include students whose sex was unknown.

Differences were also evident between the proportions of students in each of the major fields of study according to age. In 2001, students aged 15-24 were more likely than older students to do courses in fields such as *Architecture, building*; *Engineering, surveying*; and *Services, hospitality and transportation*. Students aged over 40 years were more likely than younger students to be undertaking courses within the *Land and marine resources, Animal husbandry*; *Health, community services*; *Education*; and *Science* fields of study. They were also more likely to be studying subjects not related to any specific field of study (i.e. modules only).

These differences in subject choices according to age can partly be explained by the sex proportions in the different age groupings within VET in 2001. For example, male students, who were more likely to enrol in *Engineering*, and *Architecture, building* courses, comprised a greater proportion of the 15-24 year olds. In contrast, females, who were more likely to enrol in *Health, community services* courses, made up a greater proportion of 40-64 year olds.

Table 15: Percentage of VET students in each major field of study, by age group, 2001

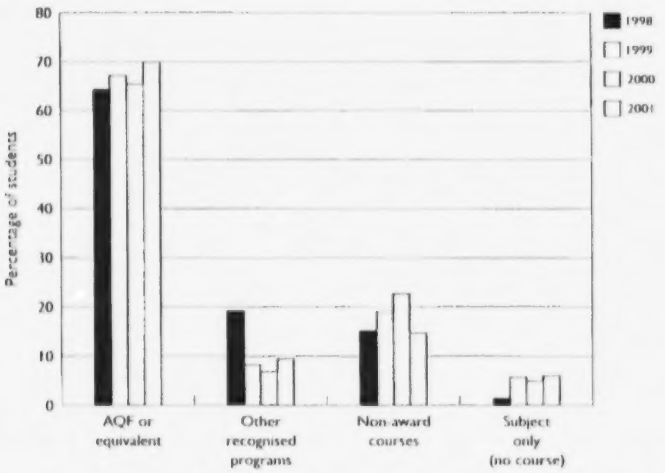
Major field of study	Proportion (%) 15-19 years	20-24 years	25-39 years	40-64 years
Land and marine resources, animal husbandry	4.2	4.6	6.1	7.3
Architecture, building	7.3	7.6	4.5	2.9
Art, humanities and social sciences	5.8	6.9	7.3	6.8
Business, administration, economics	20.7	20.8	20.2	18.3
Education	1.0	1.1	3.7	5.5
Engineering, surveying	14.5	16.5	11.3	8.1
Health, community services	6.2	8.3	10.4	11.0
Law, legal studies	0.5	0.8	0.9	0.4
Science	7.9	6.0	7.4	8.9
Veterinary science, animal care	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.1
Services, hospitality, transportation	19.5	16.1	11.3	9.4
TAFE multi-field education	10.3	8.5	11.6	12.5
Module only – no field of study	1.6	2.4	5.2	8.8
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Students ('000)	**425.3**	**274.6**	**536.8**	**477.4**

6 A student's major field of study is based on their major course. Because students can enrol in more than one course, their major course is the course leading to their highest qualification. In those cases where different courses undertaken by a student lead to the same qualification, the course accounting for the largest number of hours is considered their major course. Although students may enrol in more than one course, each student is counted only once in this table.

Qualifications

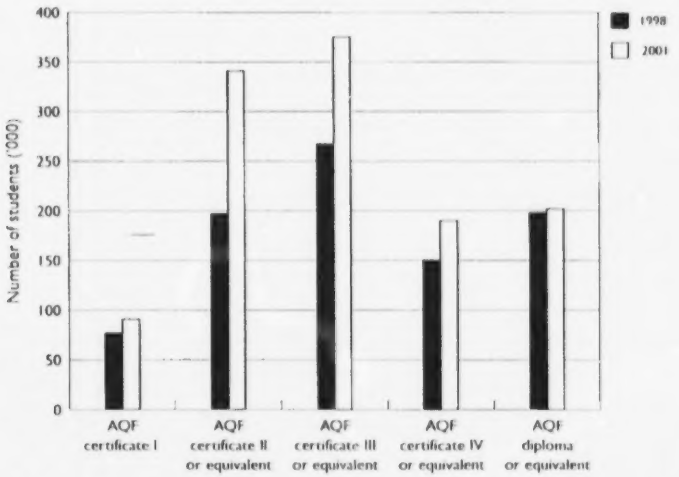
The courses undertaken by VET students can lead to a wide range of qualifications, with those recognised within the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) attracting the majority of VET students. In 2001, 70% of VET students were studying for an AQF qualification, an increase of 6 percentage points from 1998.

Figure 4: Percentage of VET students by major qualification[7], 1998 to 2001[8]



Between 1998 and 2001, most of the growth in enrolments in AQF qualifications was at the Certificate II and III levels, with increases of 73% and 40% respectively. There was an 26% increase in enrolments at the AQF Certificate IV level between 1998 and 2001, but minimal growth in the number of students enrolled in AQF Certificate I and AQF Diploma and above courses over this time.

Figure 5: VET students studying for AQF qualifications, 1998 and 2001 ('000)



There were slight differences between males and females in the level of qualifications being studied for. For example, there was a smaller proportion of females studying at the AQF Certificate III level in 2001. This can be attributed to the greater proportion of males in *Engineering, surveying* and *Architecture and building* courses at AQF Certificate III level.

7 The data are provided for the students major (i.e. highest) qualification (if the student is enrolled in more than one course).
8 Historical data should be interpreted with caution owing to the reclassification of qualifications introduced in the AVETMIS Standard between 1998 and 2001.

Table 16: Percentage of VET students at each qualification level, by sex, 2001

Qualification	Proportion (%)	
	Males	Females
AQF certificate IV or higher	21.7	23.1
AQF certificate III or equivalent	23.5	19.2
AQF certificate I + II	24.4	24.8
AQF–other	1.5	1.8
Other recognised courses	10.5	8.2
Non award courses	14.5	15.0
Subject only – no qualification	3.8	8.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
Number of students ('000)	**896.3**	**860.4**

In 2001, there were differences between age groups in the level of qualification being undertaken. For example, a large proportion of students aged 15–19 years were studying courses leading to AQF I and II qualifications, but for each of the older age groups approximately 20% were studying at this level. Those in older age groups were generally more likely to be studying for higher level qualifications. The likelihood of studying single subjects only (subjects not associated with a full course) also increased with age, accounting for 9% of those aged 40–64 years but less than 2% of those aged 15–19 years.

Table 17: Percentage of VET students at each qualification level, by age group, 2001

AQF qualification	Proportion (%)			
	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-39 years	40-64 years
AQF certificate IV or higher	15.2	29.7	27.9	21.8
AQF certificate III or equivalent	26.1	30.9	19.6	16.4
AQF certificate I + II	41.3	19.4	20.2	19.2
AQF – other	1.8	1.4	1.4	1.6
Other recognised courses	6.1	7.2	10.4	12.5
Non award courses	8.0	8.9	15.4	19.7
Module only – no qualification	1.6	2.4	5.2	8.8
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Students ('000)	**425.3**	**274.6**	**536.8**	**477.4**

As mentioned previously, students in rural and remote areas made up a higher proportion of all VET students in 2001 than their relative proportion of the Australian population. These students tended to be studying for lower level qualifications than other VET students. In 2001, 27% of rural and 33% of remote area students were studying at the AQF Certificate I or II level compared with 24% of all VET students. In contrast, 17% of rural, and 16 % of remote area students were studying at the AQF Certificate IV level or above, compared with 23% of all VET students.

Table 18: Percentage of VET students at each qualification level, by region, 2001

	Capital cities	Other metro	Rural	Remote	All students
AQF diploma or higher	14.2	9.2	6.8	6.4	11.5
AQF certificate IV or equivalent	11.3	11.2	10.1	9.7	10.8
AQF certificate III or equivalent	21.7	22.8	20.5	23.9	21.3
AQF certificate II	17.5	21.0	22.0	25.1	19.4
AQF certificate I	5.1	5.2	5.0	8.5	5.2
AQF sub-total*	**71.4**	**71.5**	**66.1**	**74.5**	**69.9**
Other recognised courses	6.1	7.2	12.2	6.7	9.4
Non award courses	14.8	14.3	14.4	14.2	14.7
Module only – no qualification	5.8	2.8	7.3	4.6	6.0
Total*	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

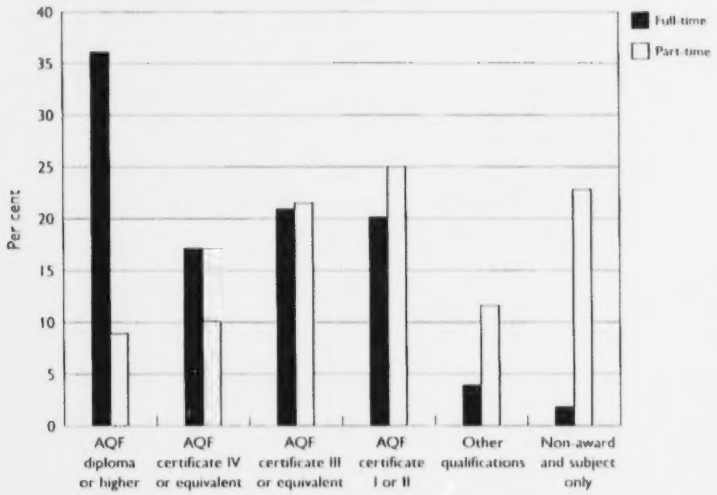
* Includes AQF Senior secondary and AQF level unknown.

Full-time and part-time training

In 2001, 90% of VET students studied part-time. The proportions of full-time and part-time students remained fairly stable from 1998 to 2001, and the proportions of males and females studying full-time and part-time were virtually identical over this time.

There were differences between full-time and part-time VET students in the level of qualifications they were undertaking. In general, full-time students were more likely than part-time students to enrol in courses that lead to higher level qualifications. In 2001, 53% of full-time students were studying for an AQF Certificate IV level qualification or higher, in contrast to 19% of part-time students.

Figure 6: Percentage of full-time and part-time VET students by qualification, 2001



Training Packages—delivery of industry-specific competencies

Throughout the past few years, the focus of the VET sector has been on the delivery of training that meets the identified needs of specific industries or industry sectors. In 1997, in response to the industry's demand for nationally consistent training outcomes and flexible delivery, the Australian National Training Authority introduced National Training Packages. Each Training Package comprises a set of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing people's skills and describes competencies relevant to a specific industry.

In 2001, training activity associated with National Training Packages involved 630 400 students who attained around 4.6 million units of competency and spent around 164.8 million hours on training (44% of annual VET hours in 2001). Almost three quarters of the students who were enrolled in Training Packages undertook an AQF II or III qualification.

Table 19: Summary of the training activity associated with National Training Packages, 2001

	Percentage of students	Percentage of annual hours
Sex		
Male	50.2	48.5
Female	49.8	51.5
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**
Course qualification level		
AQF diploma or higher	8.3	14.1
AQF certificate IV	15.1	14.8
AQF certificate III	36.3	35.6
AQF certificate II	35.6	31.5
AQF certificate I	4.8	4.0
Total*	**100.0**	**100.0**
Total ('000)	**630.4**	**164,841**

* Columns may not add exactly to total due to rounding of figures.

In 2001, training activity associated with Training Packages was concentrated in a relatively small number of skill areas. Around 55% of the Training Package units of competency were attained in the following four Training Packages[9]:

- ◇ *Hospitality industry* – accounted for 20% of the Training Package units of competency, and comprised competencies associated with such jobs as cooks, bakers, food and beverage service workers, kitchen hands, guards and security officers and front-desk receptionists, hotel accommodation managers or service supervisors, etc.
- ◇ *Administration* – accounted for 14% of the Training Package units of competency, mainly relating to competencies required for such jobs as secretaries, clerical workers, office managers or law clerks, etc.
- ◇ *Information technology* – accounted for 12% of the Training Package units of competency, and comprised competencies that relate to the jobs of keyboard operators, computing support technicians, systems managers or software designers.
- ◇ *Community services* – accounted for 10% of the Training Package units of competency, mainly associated with competencies essential for such jobs as aged/disabled persons' or children's care workers, child or youth residential care assistants, welfare professionals, youth workers, or family care workers.

Training outcomes

VET subjects can be assessed in a number of ways. Some subjects require formal assessment, and therefore receive either a 'pass' or 'fail' result; other subjects are not formally assessed and require only the completion of a specific number of study hours or tasks. Students may also gain credit for subjects by demonstrating their existing knowledge or skills (Recognition of Prior Learning), or through already having documented evidence of achievement in the relevant course or program (Credit Transfer).

In 2001, three quarters of all VET subjects[10] undertaken were assessed. The proportion of assessed subjects has been increased steadily between 1998 and 2001, from 71% to 75% of all VET subjects undertaken.

Table 20: Percentage* of VET modules by assessment status, 1998 to 2001

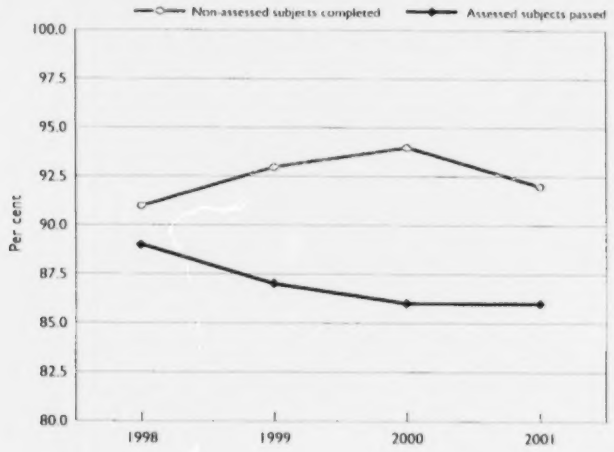
	1998	1999	2000	2001
Assessed subjects	71.0	71.6	72.6	74.6
Non-assessed subjects	5.6	5.8	6.7	5.0
Continuing studies	8.6	7.3	6.2	5.6
Recognition of Prior Learning	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5
Credit transfer	3.5	4.0	3.9	3.9
Withdrawn	8.6	8.7	8.2	8.5
Total**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Total subjects* ('000)**	**10,706.1**	**11,640.8**	**12,292.7**	**13,491.3**

* Where assessment status was known.
** Columns may not add to total due to rounding of figures.
*** Includes subjects where assessment status was not known.

In 2001, over 8.5 million assessed subjects resulted in a 'pass' result. The proportion of successful outcomes from assessed subjects decreased slightly between 2000 and 2001. The proportion of non-assessed subject that were successfully completed also decreased between 2000 and 2001, but still remained higher than in 1998.

9 Units of competency are counted under their parent training package. However, because of the flexibility available, in some cases students may be undertaking a unit of competency while being enrolled in a training package other than the parent training package.
10 Where assessment status was known.

Figure 7: Percentage of assessed and non-assessed subjects successfully completed, 1998–2001



Outcomes for selected equity groups

Training outcomes tended to vary between different groups of VET students, with those in identified 'equity' groups often faring less successfully than other students. For example, 77% of the assessed subjects undertaken by Indigenous students in 2001 resulted in a pass grade, compared with 86% of all VET students. Students in identified equity group—with the exception of students in rural and remote areas—were also more likely to withdraw from subjects in 2001.

Table 21: Assessment outcomes for selected equity groups*, 2001

	Assessed subjects passed (%)	Non-assessed subjects completed (%)	Subjects awarded RPL (%)	Subjects awarded credit transfer (%)	Subjects withdrawn (%)	Total subjects ** ('000)
Indigenous students	77.1	86.7	1.3	2.1	13.8	480.5
Students reporting a disability	84.2	92.2	1.5	4.1	13.3	543.1
Students born in a non-English-speaking country	86.1	93.6	2.1	5.0	11.2	1,805.5
Students who spoke a language other than English at home	83.8	94.1	1.6	4.1	10.5	1,549.5
Students in rural areas	86.2	93.9	2.1	3.2	7.4	3,821.7
Students in remote areas	81.7	96.2	2.9	2.1	6.7	407.6
All VET students	**85.8**	**92.4**	**2.5**	**3.9**	**8.5**	**13,322.0**

* Percentages are calculated from subjects where the assessment outcome was known.

** Includes subjects where assessment outcome was not known.

Qualifications completed

Recognised qualifications are a key output of the VET system. Qualifications act as a form of currency for individuals, assisting them in achieving personal employment goals; while for employers, they represent nationally recognised indicators of the skills and abilities of both existing and potential personnel. The number of qualifications completed within the VET sector has not been reported in previous years, primarily because a number of technical issues have limited the accuracy of the measure and its comparability across States and Territories. Since 1998, when it was first decided that qualifications would be reported as an output measure, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to address this problem. A register of qualifications, introduced in 2001, has facilitated the reporting of qualifications completed for the first time. The qualifications register is a tool that assists providers to identify students who are eligible for a qualification. The register was not fully implemented at the time of the 2001 data collection, so any data reported for 2001 should be considered with some caution.

In 2001, VET students completed almost 282 000 qualifications within the Australian Qualifications Framework. One third of students completed at the Certificate II level, and a further 29% completed at the AQF Certificate III level. Over half of all completed AQF qualifications in 2001 were from National Training Packages.

Table 22: Qualifications completed, by type and AQF level, 2001

Type of qualification	National Training Package qualification	Nationally recognised course	Other State/ Territory courses	Total
Diploma and above	7,910	21,550	1,270	30,730
AQF Certificate IV and equivalent	23,890	20,960	790	45,650
AQF Certificate III and equivalent	44,770	32,290	4,030	81,090
AQF Certificate II	58,850	29,730	5,360	93,940
AQF Certificate I	11,800	15,740	2,780	30,310
Total AQF qualifications*	**147,220**	**120,300**	**14,220**	**281,740**
Other Certificates**		84,500	63,320	147,820
Total qualifications reported	**147,220**	**204,800**	**77,540**	**429,570**

* Includes a small number of AQF Senior secondary qualifications.

** Includes statements of attainment.

In addition to AQF qualifications, there were a further 147 800 certificates completed in 2001. Over half of these were from nationally recognised courses, based on the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework and applied by State and Territory accreditation bodies. 'Other' certificates are often associated with courses developed for specific local needs, and with statements of attainment; where partial completion of a qualification is recognised.

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